

Appl. No.: 09/977,896  
Amdt. dated 10/19/2005  
Reply to Office action of 04/19/2005

Amendments to the Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of preventing reduction of sales amount of records due to a digital music file illegally distributed through a communication network, comprising:

a) collecting an illegally produced digital music file according to a kind of music of the digital music file, which is derived from a record of a cooperating record corporation, by searching the network;

b) encrypting the collected digital music file with a predetermined key; and

c) redistributing the encrypted digital music file through the network.

2. (Currently Amended) The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein at step

a) and c) the collection and redistribution ~~distribution~~ of the digital music file are performed by using a popular digital file sharing program.

3. (Currently Amended) The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein at step

a) and c) the collection and redistribution ~~distribution~~ of the digital music file are performed by using a popular digital file sharing server.

4. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein at step

b) the collected digital music file is encrypted by a public key encryption algorithm.

5. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 2, wherein at step

b) the collected digital music file is encrypted by a public key encryption algorithm.

6. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 3, wherein at step b) the collected digital

music file is encrypted by a public key encryption algorithm.

7. (Currently Amended) A method of preventing reduction of sales amount of records due to a digital music file illegally distributed through a communication network, comprising:

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a) collecting an illegally produced digital music file according to a kind of music of the digital music file, which is derived from a record of a cooperating record corporation, by searching the network;

b) inserting a watermark containing a predetermined secret information in the collected digital music file; and

c) redistributing the watermarked digital music file through the network.

8. (Currently Amended) The method as set forth in claim 7, wherein at step a) and c) the collection and redistribution ~~distribution~~ of the digital music file are performed by using a popular digital file sharing program.

9. (Currently Amended) The method as set forth in claim 7, wherein at step a) and c) the collection and redistribution ~~distribution~~ of the digital music file are performed by using a popular digital file sharing server.

10. (New) The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein collecting the illegally produced digital music file comprises selecting one of a plurality of digital music files having a same name, size and playing time.

11. (New) The method as set forth in claim 7, wherein collecting the illegally produced digital music file comprises selecting one of a plurality of digital music files having a same name, size and playing time.